Woonasquatucket Watershed Riparian Buffer Restoration

Site Nomination Form

The Woonasquatucket River Watershed Council is seeking assistance in the identification of potential riparian restoration opportunities along the Woonasquatucket River. This project is funded by the U.S. Forest Service and is being conducted in collaboration with the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management. Your help in locating potential restoration sites would be greatly appreciated.

Riparian Forested Buffers

A riparian buffer is a naturally vegetated zone adjacent to a body of water. It is a three-dimensional area that extends vertically from the groundwater to the tree canopy, and laterally from the water edge into the adjacent terrestrial habitat for a variable distance that can be as wide as several hundred or even several thousand feet. The most important part of the buffer is the zone immediately adjacent to the waterbody or within roughly 100 ft. Forested riparian buffers provide several valuable functions including:

- filtering stormwater runoff from contributing watershed and protecting the water quality of the adjacent waterbody;
- providing shade, and a source of large woody debris, and fine organic material such as leaves and twigs to the in-stream habitat where it serves as habitat as well as the base of food chain for organisms such as aquatic macro-invertebrates;
- regulating stream flows, including reducing peak storm flows (by storing runoff) and maintaining base flows by releasing this stored water slowly (relative to impervious surfaces) during dry periods;
- providing important habitat for plants and wildlife that utilize the habitat as a movement or dispersal corridor, and as habitat in and of itself.

What to Look for in a Site:

The best potential sites are those that are significantly degraded in the existing condition and can potentially be modified to restore lost or degraded buffer characteristics. Examples include sites

where forest vegetation has been removed and replaced by mowed lawn, fill, trash, or abandoned impervious surfaces. Other potential sites include buffers with poorly functioning stormwater systems (e.g., concentrated runoff carries sediment and pollutants directly to the river through paved swales, eroded gullies, or pipes, limiting infiltration into the soils of naturally vegetated cover types), soil erosion, or unstable stream banks. The best potential sites are those where the land is either publicly owned or the private owner wishes to donate the site, sell it reasonably, or restore it and place it into a permanent conservation easement. All sites should be either immediately adjacent to the Woonasquatucket River (including the waterbodies formed by dams along its length), or one of its tributaries.

How to Nominate a Site:

Please fill-out this form as completely as possible. Attach any additional information you feel might be useful. If possible include a map showing the exact location of the potential site. Completed forms should be filled-out and sent to:

Bruce DiGennaro
17 Dianne Ave
Portsmouth, RI 02871
Bruce.Digennaro@kleinschmidtUSA.com

Site Nomination Information:

1. Your name and contact information:

   Name:_____
   Address:_____
   _____
   _____
   Phone:_____
   e-mail:_____

2. Describe the location, including information on access:

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3. Indicate the owner(s) of the site and adjacent lands, if known. If privately owned, please note whether buffer evaluators have permission to enter the site to rate its potential for restoration. Also note any lots that would be necessary to travel through to gain access to the site, if applicable: _____

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4. Describe existing conditions including vegetation cover types (e.g., not vegetated, forested, field, wetland, etc.), land uses, soil conditions, erosion, stormwater drainage, dumping, public use, abandoned or historical uses, the condition of the adjacent river, stream, or waterbody (if applicable), and known wildlife usage:

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5. In what way(s) is the site degraded?: _____

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6. Describe any other information that may be helpful: _____

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